

PRESS RELEASE



The Cleveland Museum of Art

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FOR RELEASE ON RECEIPT

FROM DURER TO CEZANNE:
DRAWINGS FROM THE ASHMOLEAN MUSEUM, OXFORD
November 16, 1982 - January 2, 1983

Of the 115 drawings in this exhibition, only one has ever been shown in the United States. Chosen from the distinguished collections of the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford University, these drawings by Northern European artists--Netherlandish, German, French, and British--reflect the richness and variety of an area of the Ashmolean's holdings little known to the American public. FROM DURER TO CEZANNE, which will be on view at The Cleveland Museum of Art from November 16, 1982, through January 2, 1983, celebrates the 300th anniversary of the Ashmolean, one of the oldest public museums in the world.

The Ashmolean possesses extraordinary groups of drawings by Dürer, Claude, Rembrandt, Watteau, and J.M.W. Turner, as well as important examples by Nazarene, Pre-Raphaelite, and Impressionist artists. From the fifteenth-century Dürer watercolor landscape to the remarkably similar one executed by Cézanne at the close of the nineteenth century, the exhibition presents a cross-section of the finest drawings by some of the outstanding artists in European history.

Among these rare and beautiful works is Edouard Manet's watercolor study for his once scandalous Déjeuner sur l'herbe; seldom exhibited, it has nonetheless been the source of scholarly debate on its relationship to Manet's two paintings of the same subject. A famous costume study by Hans Holbein the Younger--a young Englishwoman crisply defined with precise lines and controlled

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washes of gray, tan and orange--was copied by two other masters, Rembrandt van Rijn (who may once have owned it) and Joshua Reynolds.

A rare drawing by Matthias Grünewald, the powerfully drawn Elderly Woman with Clasped Hands, is executed in the soft medium of chalk and displays the artist's concern with painterly qualities such as the play of light on surfaces. Peter Paul Rubens's magnificent Study of a Nude Male Torso, undoubtedly drawn from life, was probably based on poses in classical sculpture and has been related to figures in several of his famous paintings.

Yet the impressiveness of the exhibition does not rest alone upon work by major and well-known artists. Rather its great strength lies in the high quality and originality which mark all the drawings.

The principal donors of the Ashmolean's northern European collections were Francis Douce, Chambers Hall, and Grete Ring. Francis Douce (1757-1834) was a stubbornly passionate antiquarian who served briefly as head of the Department of Manuscripts in the British Museum. He was an omnivorous collector, bequeathing most of his collection to Oxford, where it is now divided between the Bodleian Library and the Ashmolean Museum. Chambers Hall (1786-1855) was more single-minded than Douce in his search for quality. Himself an extremely competent watercolorist, Hall was especially interested in watercolors of English landscape scenes and presented many works by Richard Wilson to the Ashmolean. Some of the Museum's choicest drawings came from Hall, including outstanding examples by Rembrandt, van Ostade, van Dyck, and Claude. Almost a century after the Hall donation, Grete Ring (1887-1952) extended the range of the collection by bequeathing a large number of drawings by French and German nineteenth-century artists. Other donors have included John Ruskin (1819-1900), noted critic and first Slade Professor for the History of Art at Oxford, who gave

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to the Ashmolean a celebrated series of watercolors by an artist he eloquently and enthusiastically supported, J.M.W. Turner.

DURER TO CEZANNE was organized by the Ashmolean Museum and The Jane Voorhees Zimmerli Art Museum (formerly University Art Gallery) at Rutgers University. The exhibition will be seen only at those two museums and at The Cleveland Museum of Art. A catalog written by Christopher Lloyd, assistant keeper of Western art at the Ashmolean, and other members of the Ashmolean staff is available at the Museum Bookstore. Gallery talks in the exhibition are scheduled at 1:30 pm daily (except Monday) from Wednesday, November 17, through Tuesday, November 23. The exhibition is indemnified by the Federal Council on the Arts and Humanities, and its Cleveland showing is supported with a grant from the Ohio Arts Council.

For nearly three weeks, from November 16 to December 5, DURER TO CEZANNE will run concurrently with A CENTURY OF MODERN DRAWING. A series of lectures planned in conjunction with the two exhibitions--titled "Drawings: a Fortnight Plus"--is described in an accompanying press release.

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For additional information or photographs, please contact the Public Relations Office, The Cleveland Museum of Art, 11150 East Boulevard, Cleveland, Ohio 44106; 216/421-7340.